

CAREER DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY #16

Title: Developing Positive Employment Traits



Standard 8001.01: The student will develop self-knowledge and skills related to the world of work and occupations.

Objective .0102: Understand the role of work and society.

Objective .0104: Identify and utilize the decision making/problem solving process.

Standard 8001.02: The student will explore applied technology education and related occupations.

Standard 8001.03: The student will utilize occupational information in the career planning process.

Objective .0301 Develop an awareness and understanding of six career fields.

Objective .0303 Develop basic employment and job skills.

Objective .0304 Engage in the career planning process

Time: 45-50 minutes

Materials: % Video *I Love Lucy*: The Classics Volume 6 “Job Switching” (or other appropriate video clip)

% Paper strips with the following occupations on them: construction worker, medical secretary, computer sales representative, and youth recreation leader (CD 16.7)

% One occupation card for each student (CD 16.8)

% Scratch paper for each student

% 20 blank paper strips (approximately the size of 1/4 sheet of paper)

% 4-8 markers

% 4 rolls of masking tape

% Overhead projector

% Student Record Book 

“A Stellar Performance” RB 13 (Teacher copy CD 16.9)

“A Positive Attitude = Positive Altitude” RB 14
(Teacher Copy CD 16.10)

Overheads of the following:

% Two report cards from your school (one report card should contain some poor grades, attendance, and citizenship while the other has respectable grades, excellent attendance, and good citizenship) be sure that names, student numbers, and other personal information are removed.

- % Two letters of recommendation (CD 16.11 and 16.12)
- % Two or three résumés (CD 16.13, 16.14, and 16.15)
- % Newspaper article “Job Seekers Can’t Read or Do Math” (CD 16.16)
- % Student “Chart Your Future” posters



Rationale: Students will look at the skills and traits that workers should have from the perspective of an employer. They will be asked to identify those skills and attributes that they feel are most important for workers to develop. They will then learn the ways that employers learn this information about people before they decide whom to hire. The importance of having good school records, personal references, résumé writing skills, ability to pass screening tests, and job interview skills will be discussed.

What? In what activity will the student participate?

- (1) **[10 minutes]** Show a video clip from *I Love Lucy*: The Classics Volume 6 (“Job Switching”). Begin with Lucy and Ethel under the employment sign. (**Time warning:** because of time constraints, edit out the section which shows Ricky and Fred doing housework. Also, if you include Lucy and Ethel working the candy line you will need more time.) After the video, briefly discuss the fact that employers look for people who have the skills and personal traits necessary for success on the job. They cannot afford to have employees who have not prepared themselves.
- (2) **[15 minutes]** Ask the class if anyone knows what the Department of Workforce Services is. Explain that the Department of Workforce Services is a department of the Utah State Government that has been set up to provide employment services to individuals and businesses in the state. For example, if a business needs to hire someone to do a job, the Department of Workforce Services can identify individuals who are looking for that type of work and assist the business in determining which potential workers are best prepared to do the job.

Tell students that for the next few minutes they need to imagine that they work for the Department of Workforce Services. Their job is to hire someone to work for a local company. Since it is very expensive to hire and train new workers and even more expensive and difficult to fire a worker who does a poor job, they must do their best to hire the most qualified person. **Hand out an occupation card and sheet of scratch paper to each student** (there should be four different occupations listed on the cards and roughly an equal number of cards of each of the occupations). **Tip:** It works well to hand cards to students as they enter the room. Explain that when you say “go” the students will have 1-2 minutes to write down three skills or personal traits they would want to find in the person they hired for the job. For example, if I were given a card that said “long-haul truck driver” I would write down the following skills and traits: (1) a commercial drivers license, (2) drug-free, (3) willing to be away from home for

several days at a time. Discuss briefly what would happen if someone were hired as a long-haul trucker and she/he didn't have these skills and traits (i.e., arrest, destruction of company property, destruction of others' property, death, driver could become unhappy and quit, etc.). Are there any questions? If not, tell the students that they should work **quietly on their own** for the next 1-2 minutes and say "go."


After 1-2 minutes, ask students to team up with the other students who have a card with the same occupation they have. Assign each group of students with the same occupation a specific corner of the room. Give each team five paper strips (approximately the size of 1/4 sheet of paper), a marker, and some masking tape. Each team has 3-5 minutes to compare their individual lists of skills and personal traits and agree on the five that they feel are most important. These five should be written on the paper strips and hung up on the wall with masking tape under the card with the name of the occupation they are responsible for hiring.


When all of the strips have been hung on the wall, have the students return to their seats. Ask them to compare the skills and characteristics listed for each occupation. Ask if there are any common skills or traits that are found on more than one list? As common skills and traits are identified, move the paper strips to a new place on the wall and group them in categories of similar traits and skills. Common skills and traits generally fall into three basic categories:

C education/training


C personal qualities such as honesty, responsibility, etc.


C interpersonal skills such as friendliness, teamwork, likes kids, etc.


During this process, help the students discover the concept that there are some important basic skills and personal characteristics that everyone needs to develop, regardless of the career they choose. Ask the students to open their **Record Books** , locate "A Stellar Performance" RB 13 and answer the question at the top of the page "What are some common skills and attributes people need to succeed in the world of work, regardless of their specific job, occupation, or career?" Be sure students include education/training, personal qualities, and interpersonal skills along with any others that were identified by your class.

- (3) **[15 minutes]** Ask the students how they think employers will find out about their traits when they apply for a job. As you discuss the following items, have students continue working on RB 13 in the **Record Books**  and answer the question "How do employers learn about your skills and personal traits before they decide whether to hire you?" by filling in the **"Employer Source of Information"** and **"Résumé Data Log"** columns as each item is discussed:



A. **School Records** - Have students review two different report cards from your school as you place them on the overhead projector. Ask the students to


identify what information they think employers would pay attention to. Emphasize grades, quality of classes taken, absences, number of times tardy, and citizenship. Ask the students to consider their own school records and think about what employers would think of them. Have students write two positive things that stand out on their school records in their **Record Books**  on page RB 13. Explain that it is not too late to improve their school records now, but they should **not** wait until high school or college to start. By then it may be too late.

B. Personal References - Explain that employers want to hear from people who know you well and can report what type of person/worker you are. Sometimes they will talk with your references personally and other times they will ask for letters of recommendation. Have students review the two different letters of recommendation on the overhead and ask which one they would hire and why? Ask the students who they would give as personal references. Have they impressed any adults outside of their immediate family enough to get a good recommendation? Have them record two names for personal references in their **Record Books**  on RB 13.

C. Résumé - Explain that a résumé gives the employer a chance to quickly learn about a person even if they have not met that person. Have students review the two or three different résumés on the overhead (CD 17.12 to 17.14) as you discuss them. A well-written résumé gives the job applicant a chance to introduce himself/herself in an impressive way. A poorly written résumé tells the employer that you are really not well prepared for the job. Ask the students what they could put on a résumé at this time in their lives. Emphasize that activities they are involved in at school and in the community during junior high and high school are important for their résumé (i.e., scouting, volunteer work, part-time jobs, teams, clubs, honor roll, etc.). They should be involved in these kinds of activities and keep track of what they did and when. Have students record two activities they are involved in that could go on their résumés in their **Record Books**  on RB 13.

Academic Link: The English department could teach résumé writing skills and have students develop a current résumé. This résumé could then be used to apply for school activities that students wish to participate in.


 **D. Tests** - Explain that many employers give tests to determine whether a person has the basic skills needed for the job. Show the overhead of the newspaper article “Job Seekers Can’t Read or Do Math” or another current article of your choice. It is important for students to work on basic skills such as reading, writing, math, science, speaking, and listening in school so that these tests will not be too difficult for them. Have students write their two most outstanding basic skills in their **Record Books**  on RB 13. Students may want to review their SCANS skills from CDA #12 (see Cargo Box #12 on the Chart Your Future Poster).

E. **Job Interviews** - Explain that before hiring someone, most employers want to talk with the candidates for the job. Ask the students how they should dress for a job interview. Emphasize that the best way to prepare for a job interview is to learn good communication skills now. They should practice being friendly to new people, treating others with courtesy, looking people in the eye when they are conversing, speaking confidently, etc. Ask the students to think about the clothes that are in their closets right now and write down specifically what they would wear to a job interview in their **Record Books** , RB 13.





Work-based learning link: Students could participate in a mock job interview in the 8th or 9th grade. Business partners and the work-based learning coordinator can facilitate this experience.

So What? What will the student learn as a result of participation in this activity?

[5 minutes] Ask students: “How many of you know someone who has been fired? Why were they fired? Or have you heard a brother, sister or parents complain about bad co-workers? What are their complaints? In the **Record Book** , have students do the assignment entitled “A Positive Attitude = Positive Altitude,” RB 14. This activity helps students identify some of the positive employment traits they have already developed and others that they need to work on.

Now What? What can the student do with this new information with regard to career development?

[2 minutes] Have students select five positive employment traits that they would like to work on for the next few months. They should place an  next to these traits. Have students select 2-3 negative employment traits that they would like to eliminate over the next few months. They should place an Y next to these traits. Have students refer to their **Chart Your Future Poster** 

“Positive Force Field: Progress is insured by employability traits.”

Hint: During the Wrap-up for TLC check to see how students are progressing on developing positive employment traits.

**CONSTRUCTION
WORKER**

**MEDICAL
SECRETARY**

**COMPUTER SALES
REPRESENTATIVE**

**YOUTH RECREATION
LEADER**

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

To Whom It May Concern:

I have known Tom for several years. He was in my scout troop and has also mowed my lawn for the past three years. Tom is a great guy. He is fun to be around.

I can usually depend on Tom to get the job done. Most of the time he has done it as soon as I have asked him to. He works hard when I ask him.

I hope that you will consider Tom for the job.

Sincerely,

Neighbor Ned

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to recommend that you hire Jason Ferguson. I have worked with him for the past three years at Desert Mountain Junior High School and I know him well. He served as my teacher assistant during his ninth grade year and did an excellent job.

Jason is self-motivated enough to work on his own. He is always on time for class and is rarely absent. He has a positive attitude and a good sense of humor. You will find that Jason does his best to accomplish whatever you ask him to do. He will be a great asset to your organization.

Sincerely,

Teacher Thompson

Student Resume

KAYSVILLE, UT 84037
(801) 555-1111

OBJECTIVE:

Become a computer graphic advertising designer

EXPERIENCE:

- Have taken many art classes
- Have taken many computer classes
- Have an art background

EDUCATION:

Name of School: Fairfield Junior High School

Diploma, Certificate, Grade Level: 8th

Dates of Attendance: August 1998 to present

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Many church awards
- Awards in first place design

REFERENCE:

- Available upon request

STUDENT RESUME

114 North Village Way
Smalltown, UT
(801) 555-1111

OBJECTIVE: School Musical, "Bye Bye Birdie"

SKILLS: Hard Worker
Dedication
Interaction

DESCRIPTION: Good Grades
Talented in the Arts (such as piano, singing, acting)
Successful in groups

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Employers: Mrs. Semideni, Mrs. Winmill, Mr. Bell, Mrs. Hatch, and
Mr. and Mrs. Sorensen
Position: Baby Sitter
Dates: summer of 1996 to 2000
Member of Layton Elementary School Choir for two years
Member of church choir for about two years

EDUCATION: Currently attending Fairfield Junior High, Kaysville, UT
Eighth grade
Layton Elementary School, Layton, UT
Kindergarten through Sixth Grade
Seven years of piano lessons from Anne Stewart, Linda Greenwood,
and currently Carol Anne Johnson

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Received the Presidential Education Award
Received many student of the year awards
Graduated 6th grade with a 4.0 GPA
Graduated 7th grade with 3.97 GPA
First term of Eighth grade 4.0 GPA
Captain of Third Quarter Team in NAL
Sang a duet with Briana Christensen in Girls Choir for a concert
Have performed numerous piano recitals

REFERENCES: Available upon request

**1224 SOUTH HAIGHT CREEK DRIVE
MIDTOWN, UT**

OBJECTIVE: Receptionist for Ethan Allen Home Furnishings

QUALIFICATIONS:

Participating in national Junior Honor Society for two years

Demonstrating creative writing skills

Learning new scrapbook skills and ideas in class

Organizing own person scrapbook

Having presented imaginative ideas in "Night of the Notables"

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Earning high honor roll status both for academic achievement and citizenship performance for last six terms

Attaining position on Farmington Junior High Volleyball Team

Being recognized through various teacher awards

Being an accomplished pianist

LEADERSHIP:

Leading Windridge Elementary Students as their Student Body President

Directing church youth class as their president

Captaining my Club Davis volleyball team this past year

“Forty percent of all 17-year-olds do not have the necessary math skills-- and more than 60 percent do not have the necessary reading skills-- to work in a \$33,000 per annum production job at a modern auto plant.”

ACT, Inc., “The National Job Analysis Study: A Project to Identify Cross-Occupational Skills Related to High Performance Workplaces,”
November 1995

The American Management Association reported that 38.3 percent of job applicants tested in 1999 lacked sufficient skills for the positions they sought.

American Management Association, “Workplace Testing, Basic Skills, Job Skills Psychological Measurement, Summary of Key Findings,” 2000, p. 1.